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ABSTRACT

The correlation between a bilingual's usage of grammatical morphemes from one of his/her languages and his/her language dominance is examined. The subject is a three-year-old Danish/English bilingual who code-switches at the morpheme level even though she has never been exposed to a code-switching bilingual community. Co-occurrence restrictions are found in her code-switching grammar as follows: English grammatical morphemes co-occur with either English or Danish lexical morphemes, but Danish grammatical morphemes co-occur only with Danish lexical morphemes. It appears that in utterances containing morpheme-level code-switching, the encoding of grammatical morphemes in one language is an indication of the dominance of that language. By that criterion, the code-switching of this subject is English-dominant. (Author/MSE)

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Abstract

Word-Internal Code-Switching Constraints in a
Bilingual Child's Grammar

Jennifer Petersen

This study examines the correlation between a bilingual's usage of grammatical morphemes from one of his/her languages and his/her language dominance. The subject of this study is a Danish-English bilingual three-year-old who code-switches at the morpheme-level, even though she has never been exposed to a code-switching bilingual community. Co-occurrence restrictions are found in her code-switching grammar as follows: English grammatical morphemes co-occur with either English or Danish lexical morphemes. Danish grammatical morphemes, however, co-occur only with Danish lexical morphemes. I have claimed here that in utterances containing morpheme-level code-switching, the encoding of grammatical morphemes in language X is an indication of language X-dominance. Thus the code-switching grammar of the subject of this study is English-dominant.

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WORD-INTERNAL CODE-SWITCHING CONSTRAINTS IN A
BILINGUAL CHILD'S GRAMMAR

Jennifer Petersen

1.0. Introduction

The term "code-switching" is used to refer to any abrupt and momentary shifting from one code to another, within a speech context. Examples of higher level code-switching are given in (1) and (2) below:

1. mana WHEN YOU THINK OF IT ?ana mahiiti kwayyisa ('I ... my salary is good')
(Arabic-English, Eid 1985) (ENGLISH IS IN CAPS)
2. Y en Puerto Rico HE WOULD SAY que cortaba cana, EVEN THOUGH tenia su negocio, YOU KNOW ('and in Puerto Rico ... that he cut cane, ... he had his own business, ...') (Spanish-English, Sankoff & Poplack 1980)

Although code-switching may appear to be arbitrary and unsystematic, studies have shown that there are actually patterns that emerge when code-switching data are examined closely.

(Poplack 1980, Sankoff & Poplack 1981, Timm 1975, Pfaff 1976 and 1979)

According to Dulay, Burt & Krashen (1982), code-switching often "obeys rather strict structural rules in addition to the grammatical rules of each of the component languages." This

paper contributes to the assertion that code-switching is not random and that there are constraints on where it can take place.

The particular case I will be discussing is that of a Danish-English bilingual child, Thea, at age three years, two months. She has never been exposed to individuals who code-switch, yet she herself code-switches at the morpheme level. Examples of word-internal code-switching include the following:

3. GASOLINEn kommer från CORPUS CHRISTI i PIPER till AUSTIN ('the+GASOLINE comes from ... in PIPE+s to ...') (Swedish-English, Ureland 1971)
4. han som blev KILLad i kriget ('he who was KILL+ed in the war') (Swedish-English, Ureland 1971)
5. Der CAN GERMAN TALKen ('he CAN SPEAK GERMAN') (German-English, Macnamara 1967)
6. THEY ARE stimmING (... 'tune+ING instruments') (German-English, Leopold 1954)
7. I'M lavING pandekageS (... 'make+ING pancake+S') (Danish-English, Thea, age 3;2)

These examples of word-internal code-switching reveal constraints on how the two languages can be combined in a single word. The constraints in Thea's grammar appear to follow the same pattern as that documented for other bilinguals in the literature. I will discuss the code-switching

pattern found in Thea's grammar as well as in the literature, and suggest that there may be a correlation between a bilingual's code-switching pattern and his/her dominant language.

2.0. Background of the Informant

At the time data on her speech were collected, Thea was an only child who had lived in the U.S. since birth; she was exposed to English in day care, babysitting and social situations for approximately 30 hours per week. The remaining hours were spent in contact with her Danish-speaking parents.

Thea is always addressed in Danish by her parents. She hears them speaking English to others and occasionally to each other in social and business situations. During visits from Danish relatives and friends to her home, she is always addressed in Danish. Attempts have not been made to force her to speak either Danish or English.

There is very minimal parental code-switching; if it is done at all, it is done at the discourse level. Discussions of her father's job are usually conducted entirely in English. On the

rare occasions when these English conversations are conducted in front of Thea, or if her mother absent-mindedly answers "Sure" in English to one of Thea's requests, Thea invariably shouts, "Snak dansk!", that is, "Speak Danish!".

At the time of the taping, Thea was aware of the fact that Danish and English are two separate codes. She could identify words and some grammatical morphemes as being either Danish or English as well as translate freely. She would frequently make metalinguistic comments such as "She can't understand Danish", "You speak too much Danish, Mama" and "How do you say that in English?" -- an indication that she has not simply internalized a single grammar which includes both Danish and English morphemes.

3.0. The Data

The data collected consist of four hours of taped conversations and monologues, which I phonetically transcribed. 10% of the data was independently transcribed as a reliability check, which revealed a 94% agreement between the two transcriptions.

The transcribed data are divided into open categories, including lexical morphemes, and closed categories, including grammatical morphemes. Both inflections and function words are included under grammatical morphemes. The set of grammatical morphemes chosen for examination in this study is not exhaustive. The grammatical morphemes examined in this study have been chosen partly because of their high frequency of occurrence in the data and partly because they are structurally distinguishable. Words and morphemes which are common to both languages have been disregarded. Such ambiguous forms from "the linguistically neutral zone" (Stolt 1964) have not been considered as either confirming of or contradictory to my claims.

3.1. Possible Word Types

There are four logically possible word types when two languages are combined within a word:

Word Type

1: Gdom+Ldom	grammatical morphemes from the dominant language co-occurring with lexical morphemes from the dominant language <u>HER DOLLY</u>
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- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| 2: Gdom+Lnon-dom | grammatical morphemes from the dominant language co-occurring with lexical morphemes of the non-dominant language
<u>HER dukke</u> (... 'doll') |
| 3: Gnon-dom+Lnon-dom | grammatical morphemes from the non-dominant language co-occurring with lexical morphemes of the non-dominant language
<u>henes dukke</u> ('her doll') |
| 4: Gnon-dom+Ldom | grammatical morphemes from the non-dominant language co-occurring with lexical morphemes of the dominant language
<u>henes DOLLY</u> ('her'...) |

4.0. Findings

Thea's corpus reveals the following: Danish lexical morphemes co-occur with either English or Danish grammatical morphemes. Danish grammatical morphemes, however, co-occur only with Danish lexical morphemes, whereas English grammatical morphemes co-occur with either Danish or English lexical morphemes.

Below, under Word type 2, are some examples of word-internal code-switching in Thea's grammar. In these examples, English grammatical morphemes -- verb suffixes in this case -- are combined with Danish lexical morphemes -- verb stems in this case:

Verb stems plus verb suffixes (Note that in this category, lexical morphemes precede grammatical morphemes.)

<u>Wd. Type</u>	<u>lex.</u> <u>mor.</u>	<u>gram.</u> <u>mor.</u>	
1	Eng.	Eng.	<u>MAKING, LIKES</u>
2	Dan.	Eng.	<u>boRS</u> ('live' + S), <u>vaskING</u> ('wash' + ING), <u>fåING</u> ('get' + ING)
3	Dan.	Dan.	<u>mangler</u> ('lack' + Danish present tense marker), <u>parkerer</u> ('park' + Danish present tense marker)

(See Appendix A for additional grammatical categories examined in this study.)

Following are hypothetical examples of what would be considered as ungrammatical utterances if they did appear, that is, word type 4 utterances consisting of Danish grammatical morphemes co-occurring with English lexical morphemes:

Verb stems plus verb suffixes: *WASHer ('washes'), *LIVER ('lives')
(See Appendix B for additional non-occurring utterances of word type 4.)

Thus, of the four logically possible word types in a word-internal code-switching grammar, only three occur in Thea's grammar, as shown below:

Thea's code-switching grammar

Word type 1:	Gdom+Ldom	<u>HER DOLLY</u>
Word type 2:	Gdom+Lnon-dom	<u>HER dukke</u>
Word type 3:	Gnon-dom+Lnon-dom	<u>hendes dukke</u>
*Word type 4:	Gnon-dom+Ldom	* <u>hendes DOLLY</u>

5.0. The Notion of Dominant Language

The Dominant Language Hypothesis

The Dominant Language Hypothesis states that in word-internal code-switching, grammatical morphemes of the dominant language may co-occur with lexical morphemes of either the dominant or the non-dominant language. However, grammatical morphemes of the non-dominant language may co-occur only with lexical morphemes of the non-dominant language.

According to the Dominant Language Hypothesis, a grammar allowing only for word types 1, 2 and 3 is the expected pattern for an English-dominant bilingual. Because Thea's code-switching grammar follows this expected pattern, I consider her to be English-dominant. In addition to the apparent correlation between the constraints discovered in Thea's grammar and her English dominance, there are also four

independent reasons for considering her to be English-dominant.

The notion dominant language may be defined either behaviorally or through the linguistic context of the bilingual. On a behavioral level, the dominant language is the language in which the bilingual is most proficient. Since Thea is most proficient in English, this is one reason to consider her to be English dominant.

A second reason to consider Thea to be English-dominant has to do with the amount of code-switching that occurs when she speaks her respective languages. In the case of code-switching bilinguals, the dominant language is that in which the bilingual can converse without code-switching. Weinreich (1953) notes that there is often a differing amount of switching when one is speaking one language as opposed to another. For example, a bilingual starting a conversation in Language A may code-switch more often into Language B than he/she does when he/she starts a conversation in Language B and then switches into Language A. In this case, Language B would be considered to be the

dominant language, since it is more resistant to intrusion (including code-switching). The non-dominant language, on the other hand, is often "contaminated" with frequent instances of code-switching. In Thea's case, when English is spoken, there is no code-switching into Danish. When "Danish" is spoken, however, there is a considerable amount of code-switching between languages on her part, a further indication that her dominant language is English.

A third criterion for determining language dominance comes from the language context of the bilingual. Incorporating linguistic material from one language to another is a characteristic of socio-economic subordination (Dulay, Burt & Krashen 1982). Thus social factors often play a role in which language is considered to be dominant; the standard language of the host country, and thus the language used by many of the bilingual child's peers, is often the dominant language. Bilingual children tend to identify more with their peers than with their non-host language parents. Thea's peers are

English-speakers; this is another reason for considering her to be English-dominant.

Although lexical morphemes are approximately equally divided between Danish and English in frequency of occurrence in Thea's corpus, statistically, there are many instances of English grammatical morphemes and relatively few instances of Danish grammatical morphemes. This prevalence of grammatical morphemes in English also suggests that Thea is English dominant.

Thus there are four reasons for considering Thea to be English dominant, independent of the claim made in the Dominant Language Hypothesis that she is English dominant because of the constraints in her code-switching grammar.

6.0. Fusions

In cases where very young children acquire two languages simultaneously, one might question whether the child is distinguishing between two different lexicons while applying the same syntactic rules to both languages. Volterra & Taeschner (1977) have suggested that bilingual children go through such a stage. Indeed, in the earlier stages of Thea's language development, she

was apparently not using Danish grammatical morphemes productively. Evidence indicating this non-productive use of Danish grammatical morphemes from age 1;6 to age 2;6 includes the presence of English overgeneralizations such as *goed, whereas there were no similar overgeneralizations in Danish at the time. In addition, her Danish grammatical morphemes did not appear to be "detachable", that is, they seem to have been learned as units, where a grammatical morpheme is thought of as being part of a lexical morpheme. Peters (1983) discusses such "fusions" in monolingual children, where, for example, a child would think of the word wanna as a single unit, rather than as want + to, as in I don't wanna to go home. Evidence of fusions in Thea's corpus can be seen in (8) and (9) below:

8. THE pigen ('THE girl+the') (expected form in her grammar: pigen or THE pige)
9. THE navlen ('THE navel+the') (expected form in her grammar: navlen or THE navle)

In (8), the utterance THE pigen is redundant; although the suffix -n in these cases is the Danish definite article, Thea still uses the English definite article THE. This would seem to

indicate that at age 1;6, she believed the Danish word for 'girl' to be pigen, rather than pige.

7.0. Discussion

Although Thea's earlier stages of language acquisition seem to indicate that she considered Danish grammatical morphemes to be part of their adjacent lexical morphemes, by the time the taping took place at age 3;2, she was using Danish grammatical morphemes productively. Consider (10), (11) and (12) below:

Examples of overgeneralizations of the regular Danish past tense marker -ede in the corpus:

10. *svømmede 'swam' (should be svøm)
11. *slåede 'hit' (should be slog)
12. *skeede 'happened' (should be skete)

These examples indicate that at age 3;2, Thea was using Danish grammatical morphemes productively. Why then, did Thea continue to prefer English grammatical morphemes even when she was able to use Danish grammatical morphemes productively? I believe that the reason for this has to do with her English dominance. Borrowing lexical morphemes from another language might simply be due to lexical gaps in one language. Borrowing

grammatical morphemes from another language, however, is more serious. Since a language presumably has all necessary grammatical morphemes at its disposal, borrowing them from another language would seem to be an indication that the bilingual considers that other language to be superior in some way, or at least an indication that it is the dominant language.

8.0. Supporting Evidence in the Literature

The claim I have made about the correlation between Thea's dominant language and the co-occurrence restrictions described in the Dominant Language Hypothesis can also be generalized to include other bilingual situations. The co-occurrence restrictions discovered in Thea's code-switching grammar are similar to those found in the literature. The literature on code-switching contains very few systematic descriptions of word-internal code-switching. Hasselmo's (1972 & 1980) data on Swedish-English bilinguals is a notable exception and is especially interesting since it reveals asymmetries similar to those found in Thea's data. His corpus reveals situations where the

corresponding co-occurrence restriction to that in Thea's grammar holds, that is, among Swedish-dominant bilinguals, Swedish grammatical morphemes can co-occur with English lexical morphemes, but not the converse. (For comparison's sake, in order to relate Hasselmo's data to that of a three-year-old child, I have simplified his co-occurrence restrictions. He actually proposes a "hierarchy of ordered selection", including more complicated syntactic categories in addition to the grammatical morphemes which I have examined in Thea's language.)

Leopold's classic study of his German-English bilingual daughter, Hildegard, also suggests a pattern of allowable word types similar to Thea's. During the period of her life where the family was living in the U.S., Leopold's American-born daughter is described as being English-dominant. At age 4, Hildegard code-switched frequently while speaking what Leopold refers to as "German", but which perhaps might be thought of as her code-switched interlanguage. According to Leopold, her language at that time consisted of

"mostly [German] vocabulary items inserted into English sentences", including English grammatical endings on German nouns and verbs. (Leopold, 1954)

Although Leopold does not systematically discuss possible constraints on English lexical morphemes co-occurring with German grammatical morphemes, his data suggest that Hildegard's code-switching grammar has the same pattern of constraints as that put forth in the Dominant Language Hypothesis, namely that grammatical morphemes of the non-dominant language, German, do not co-occur with lexical morphemes of the dominant language, English.

Mushira Eid has examined co-occurrence constraints on clause-level code-switching in Arabic-English (1985). Her corpus reveals that code-switching at the clause level is not random; co-occurrence restrictions exist. She discusses code-switching relative to certain "focal points", which are grammatical markers of clauses, such as conjunctions and relative markers. Since these focal points are grammatical markers, they can be considered to be the clause-level counterpart of

grammatical morphemes occurring at the morpheme level. Thus among Arabic-dominant informants, if co-occurrence restrictions were discovered at the clause level in a pattern parallel to that found in Thea's grammar at the morpheme level, one would expect to find the following code-switching pattern:

Arabic-dominant clause-level code-switching grammar:

<u>focal points of clause</u> (counterpart of grammatical morphemes)	<u>remainder of clause</u> (counterpart of lexical morphemes)
Word type 1: Arabic	Arabic
Word type 2: Arabic	English
Word type 3: English	English
*Word type 4: English	Arabic

Although Eid herself has not charted her data as shown above, the chart nevertheless illustrates the conclusions she draws from her data, that is, in an Arabic-dominant code-switching grammar, word type 4 -- consisting of an English focal point of the clause followed by the rest of the clause in Arabic -- would be considered ungrammatical. Thus Eid's data suggests a similar pattern of constraints at a higher sentence-level.

9.0. Predictions

In this study of Thea's code-switching grammar, only morphological categories have been examined. However, I would hypothesize that future studies of her code-switching grammar, as it becomes more syntactically sophisticated, would reveal a similarly-skewed pattern of co-occurrence constraints above the word level, corresponding to the pattern found word-internally. In an English-dominant clause-level code-switching grammar, for example, one would expect to hear utterance (13) from a Danish-English bilingual:

Higher level code-switching predictions:

13. WHO bor i byen (... , WHO 'lives in the city')

In this case, the relative marker, a "grammatical item", is in English. One would not expect to hear utterance (14) from such a bilingual, that is, a Danish relative marker co-occurring with an English clause:

14. *.... som IS CHEAPEST (... , 'which'...)

Although there are only a few word-internal analyses of code-switching in the literature, it is my belief that the few studies in existence --

as well as the numerous reports I have heard from parents of bilingual children -- give compelling evidence in support of my claims.

10.0. Summary and Conclusions

One crucial difference between Thea's word-internal code-switching and that documented in the literature is that Thea has had no code-switching model, whereas the word-internal code-switching described in the literature takes place within different communities of bilinguals. McLaughlin (1978) has suggested that since bilinguals are able to distinguish their two languages from each other and apply different rules to each language by the age of three, the code-switched language they use might be thought of as a third code. For example, one Yugoslavian-born woman who was fluent in Serbo-Croatian and had passive knowledge of English when she moved to the Milwaukee area encountered such a third code when she became involved in the Milwaukee Serbian community, which is known for its code-switched language (Ward 1975). The woman, although familiar with both English and Serbo-Croatian, could not understand

the code-switched language used in the Milwaukee Serbian community. "I had to learn another whole language," she said. The existence of such a third code seems to be the rule in many bilingual communities. Some bilinguals even partially forget their first and/or second codes in favor of their third, code-switched code.

In order to determine whether code-switching arises naturally, or whether it is learned from a code-switching community, it is necessary to examine the language of a bilingual child raised in isolation from a code-switching community. Thea is an example of such a case. Since the code-switching constraints discovered in her grammar cannot have been learned from a bilingual community, it is reasonable to assume that they can be attributed to her English dominance.

I have hypothesized that language situations similar to Thea's would presumably result in co-occurrence restrictions identical to those discovered in her code-switching grammar, as presented in the Dominant Language Hypothesis. Additional systematic case studies of

word-internal code-switching would materially
improve the validity of claims made in this paper.

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APPENDIX A

Grammatical categories examined in this study (Continued from above)

2. Articles plus noun stems

<u>Wd. type</u>	<u>gram.</u> <u>mor.</u>	<u>lex.</u> <u>mor.</u>	
1	Eng.	Eng.	<u>THE BOTTLE</u> , <u>THE</u> <u>OWIE</u> , <u>A PICNIC</u>
2	Eng.	Dan.	<u>THE dukke</u> (... 'doll'), <u>A bog</u> (... 'book'), <u>A flaske</u> (... 'bottle')
3	Dan.	Dan.	<u>loftet</u> ('attic' + Danish definite article), <u>et bur</u> (Danish indef. art. + 'cage')

3. Possessive pronouns plus nouns

<u>Wd. type</u>	<u>gram.</u> <u>mor.</u>	<u>lex.</u> <u>mor.</u>	
1	Eng.	Eng.	<u>HIS TONGUE</u> , <u>MY</u> <u>SANDBOX</u> , <u>OUR HOUSE</u>
2	Eng.	Dan.	<u>MY naese</u> (... 'nose'), <u>MY bad</u> (... 'bath'), <u>HIS øine</u> (... 'eyes')
3	Dan.	Dan.	<u>min seng</u> ('my bed')

4. Demonstratives plus nouns

<u>Wd. type</u>	<u>gram.</u> <u>mor.</u>	<u>lex.</u> <u>mor.</u>	
1	Eng.	Eng.	<u>THIS ONE</u> , <u>THAT HOLE</u> <u>THAT BUBBLE</u>

- | | | | |
|---|------|------|--|
| 2 | Eng. | Dan. | <u>THAT bølge</u> (... 'wave')
<u>THOSE dåse</u> (... 'con-
tainers'), <u>THAT mad</u>
(... 'food') |
| 3 | Dan. | Dan. | <u>denne bil</u> ('this car') |

5. Noun stems plus plurals (note that in this category, lexical morphemes precede grammatical morphemes)

<u>Wd. type</u>	<u>lex.</u>		<u>gram.</u>
	<u>mor.</u>	<u>mor.</u>	
1	Eng.	Eng.	<u>PICTURES, BOTTLES, PAINTS</u>
2	Dan.	Eng.	<u>øies</u> ('eye' + S), <u>hoveds</u> ('head' + S), <u>ballons</u> ('balloon' + S)
3	Dan.	Dan.	<u>øine</u> ('eyes'), <u>bøger</u> ('books'), <u>pandekager</u> ('pancakes')

6. Infinitive markers plus verb stems

<u>Wd. type</u>	<u>gram.</u>		<u>lex.</u>
	<u>mor.</u>	<u>mor.</u>	
1	Eng.	Eng.	<u>TO EAT, TO HEAR, TO CUT</u>
2	Eng.	Dan.	<u>TO tegne</u> (... 'draw'), <u>TO lege</u> (... 'play')
3	Dan.	Dan.	<u>at lege</u> ('to play')

7. Auxiliaries/modals plus verb stems

<u>Wd. type</u>	<u>gram.</u>		<u>lex.</u>
	<u>mor.</u>	<u>mor.</u>	
1	Eng.	Eng.	<u>WILL EAT, DID GET, COULD ... DO</u>
2	Eng.	Dan.	<u>DID sove</u> (... 'sleep'), <u>SHOULD ligge</u> (... 'lie'), <u>COULD klistre</u> (... 'glue')
3	Dan.	Dan.	<u>skal høre</u> ('shall hear') <u>skal gøre</u> ('shall do')

APPENDIX B

Non-occurring utterances (Continued from above)

2. Articles plus noun stems: *en DOLL and *et LEG (Danish indefinite article + ENGLISH NOUN); *WATERet, *LADYen (ENGLISH NOUN + Danish definite article)
3. Possessive pronouns plus nouns: *hans EYES ('his'...), *min BED ('my'...)
4. Demonstratives plus nouns: *denne DOG ('this' ...), *dette HOUSE ('that' ...)
5. Noun stems plus plurals: *PAINTER ('paints'), *DOLLXer ('dollies')
6. Infinitive markers plus verb stems: *at EAT ('to' ...)
7. Auxiliaries/modals plus verb stems: *skal EAT ('shall'...), *kunne DO ('could' ...)

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